



Kirche in Not Ostpriesterhilfe e.V.

CAMECO: According to the overall number of projects received by your organisation, do media projects hold a noteworthy share? Has this number increased or decreased during the last years? Which dissimilarities do you recognise in the different regions?

The number of media projects we received has stabilised over the last few years: its percentage fluctuates at around 1 to 2% of the total number of projects. We received 183 projects in 1994; and 177 in 1998. There have however been some changes in the regions: for instance, Africa used to send more media projects. This has decreased sharply and is now steadily increasing in Latin America. Eastern Europe remains our priority region for media projects, however the number of

projects and costs remain stable there. It should also be said that our answers to applicants from Africa have been mostly negative, whereas they have been of a more positive nature in Latin America. This is due to the fact that many African projects are not well conceived.

Cameco: Would you say that media projects receive enough consideration in the regions you are working in?

Yes, definitely. We consider the use of media as absolutely essential for evangelisation efforts in the present secularised and media orientated world, and as media projects tend to be costly, they must be examined in a very thorough way to check their feasibility and continuity.

Cameco: Are you of the opinion that media play an important supportive role in development, evangelisation, promotion of human rights and democratisation? Can they contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of the poor? Do you have any examples in mind from your region of concern?

Somebody once said that television is the most efficient pulpit ever built. However, this is only true if it is used well and professionally. The example of a young priest in Brazil comes to mind: Fr. Rossi's televised masses attract more viewers than many popular programmes. If the Church does not use media in today's world – or does not use them efficiently, as we may observe in some European countries, her redemptive Word is simply not heard by the immense majority of society and the Church is then marginalised. In Russia, for instance, radio was and still is (now together with television) a strong influence in the democratisation of the country. Media in Russia also play an important role in ecumenical affairs in the face of mounting nationalism. In Latin America – Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador – radio is also important to teach the poor and the isolated populations. Both radio and TV are of great significance in Latin America in countering the enormous media presence of the sects.

CAMECO: Can you recall media projects (i.e. magazines, radio, video productions, training activities for journalists and pastoral workers involved in communications, etc) which you would consider successful? – Why? Are there media initiatives you would consider as being a failure? Why?

Failure: Printing presses in Africa have often been a failure due to mismanagement, miscalculations and the dire economic situation of African countries. How to cover the running costs of media projects is a general problem in almost every country in Africa. Many failures were due to problems in the areas mentioned above.

Success: Radio Resurrection in Ukraine. In a very complex environment (still an anti-religious biased government, anti-Catholic and anti-Uniate feelings from the majority of the population, as well as no previous experience from Catholics in media in that country), a group of young Greek Catholics started a radio programme ten years ago which is still running today with a sizeable and appreciative audience.

Radio Catedral, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and the "Rede Católica de Rádio": a Christian radio station which has built up a large audience, with popular religious and educational programming. Rede Católica is a national network of over 100 religious radio stations linked by satellite and also has effective programming similar to that of Radio Cathedral – which is an affiliate of the network.

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